

## **What to do if your child experiences inappropriate behaviour in sport**

### **Talk to your child about what happened**

Talk to your child about the incident – what happened and how your child feels about the situation. Allow space for your child's feelings and experiences.

If you suspect a crime, contact the police immediately. If you are unsure whether there are grounds to suspect a crime, you can consult the police. You may also seek advice from Victim Support Finland or the 'Et ole yksin' -service.

### **Contact your child's coach**

Reach out to your child's coach. Even if the coach is the person who behaved inappropriately, try to discuss the issue with them first. It may also be a misunderstanding or, for example, a child's disappointment during training. In such cases, consider together how the coach can best support your child.

Coaches are committed to treating all children with respect, and as a parent, you are likewise committed to treating the club's staff with respect. Always give feedback calmly, so it is easier to receive. If a child experiences mistreatment by other athletes, the coach is responsible for intervening. The 'Et ole yksin' service's webpages contain guidance for coaches on how to intervene in bullying and harassment. You can use this guidance to help you discuss ways to intervene in bullying.

Sometimes a coach's intervention is not enough, and situations require a more thorough investigation. For example, this may occur if the coach behaves inappropriately or if bullying within the group cannot be stopped. You can contact the club's designated person, the club administration, or, for example, the coach's supervisor. You can discuss together the best way to address the inappropriate behaviour your child is experiencing. The club has a responsibility to tackle bullying, violence, harassment, and any other inappropriate behaviour within the club. Clubs can also be made aware of the guidance on intervention available in the 'Et ole yksin' service's resource bank.

### **The club shall consult all parties on this matter**

The club should consult all parties involved. Ensure that children and their views are also taken into account during the investigation.

The child has the right to be heard in decisions that affect them, and should be given the opportunity to correct their behaviour if they have acted inappropriately. It is important to explain to the child what behaviour is expected in the future and which aspects of their behaviour were wrong. As a guardian, you have the right to participate in a minor's hearing.

Situations can often be resolved through discussion. You can also request a face-to-face meeting with the coach and others involved. In conflicts, it is often helpful to invite an impartial party to join the meeting, providing an external perspective on the matter. You can ask the club to share their policies during the meeting. All adults working with children and young people must be aware of the club's rules and policies. Every child has the right to be treated with respect and to enjoy a safe environment for their hobby.

In resolving any conflict, the child's best interests must be the priority. It is advisable to request a written summary of the meeting and any agreements reached to prevent misunderstandings later.

If the matter is not resolved at the club, you can also seek advice from your national sport association or a regional sport association. Many national sport associations have designated contact persons for such matters. The 'Et ole yksin' service can help you identify the appropriate contact for your national sport association.

You can report ethical violations in sport through the ILMO service provided by FINCIS (Finnish Centre for Integrity in Sports). Do not deal with the issue alone – the 'Et ole yksin' service provides confidential and professional conversational support and advice.